

NO CHANGE in Class. ☒ ~~DECLASSIFIED~~

Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C

DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77

Auth: DDA REG. 77/1763

Date: 030478 By: 025

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

~~INTELLIGENCE REPORT~~

COUNTRY Germany/Russian Zone

DATE: 25X1A6a

25X1A2g

INFO. 

SUBJECT Top Officials of SED React to the Outcome of the Elections and Discuss Future Line of SED Policies

DIST. 2 January 1947

PAGES 3

SUPPLEMENT

ORIGIN 

25X1A6a

25X1X6

1. At a meeting of Berlin SED leaders following the election, Hermann Matern spoke of the propaganda methods used by the SED and admitted that they had been wrong, particularly mentioning the failure of its women's policy. The actual reason for the SED's defeat, that is, its total dependence on the Russians, was brought out forcibly by Matern. He stated, for example, that this dependence had prevented the SED from taking a firm stand on the question of the eastern boundary; further, it forced the SED newspapers, right in the middle of the election campaign, to print long Molotov speeches which were of no interest to the German people. This total dependence on the Russians meant that the SED had to approve, defend, or silently accept everything that the Russians did, and that it was unable to take a clear, oppositional stand against such things as the deportation of skilled workers. As a result, in the course of time, the impression arose among the people (which was not entirely false) that the SED is identical with the Russians. Matern claimed that as long as the Russians continue their extremely sharp censorship of SED newspapers and every action of the party depends on Russian approval or decision, there is not likely to be any change. Moreover, he stated, even leading SED men are well aware that this forced union with the Russians may one day lead the party to complete bankruptcy, especially should the SPD succeed in maintaining the powerful position it has won.

2. Matern listed the following reasons for the defeat of the SED:

(1) The effect of Russian actions in Berlin during a triumphal entry (rape, robbery, etc.); these acts have not been forgotten, especially by the women. Thus, in the Soviet Sector, before the election, a mimeographed circular was spread saying:

"Watch, watch, woman, come!

Thus it began.

German women,

Think of that when you vote!"

(Uhri, Uhri, Frau, komm!

So fing es an.

Deutsche Frau.

Wenn du wählst, denke dran!)

25X1A9a

CLASSIFICATION

25X1A9a

25X1A8a

ADSO	FBK	FBT	SPDF	VTO					
DADSO	FBK	FBV	SPDS	B DEP.					
EXEC.	FBL	FBX	SPDT						
CONTROL	FBM	FBZ	SCD	CTR					
PLANS	FBP	FBP	TRE						

25X1A2g

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

- 2 -

(2) The SED has not been able to convince the Berliners that it is a German party and, despite all tactical maneuvers, it has not been able to persuade the masses that it can carry out an independent German policy. Under the pressure of Russian censorship its newspapers were often one-sided. That could not fail to be noticed after an ever-increasing number of oppositional papers in Berlin took up the fight against the SED.

(3) The important leaders in the SED are emigres and do not understand what the German people have been through and what they have suffered in the past twelve years. They have shown themselves extremely poor psychologists.

(4) The SED bore the responsibility in Berlin for what has been accomplished. That the people were not more grateful to the SED for its extraordinary accomplishments was distressing to Herr Matern. However, the experiences of the years 1918-19 show that in such hard times it is easy to mislead a people so unschooled politically and so ruined as the German people now are. The SED made no promises but worked. The masses ran to those who had not worked but had only made promises and had awakened in the German people the illusion that they could escape the consequences of the war.


3. The same source reports that at a meeting of the SED Executive Board, 24 October, Hermann Matern stated that the SED is willing to accept responsibility only in line with the election results. Accordingly, the SED will not nominate any first burgomasters, even in the Soviet Sector of Berlin. He also said that, in the future, the party must resist Russian measures with all its power when such measures are likely to damage the political work of the party, and the Russians must be shown quite definitely what political damage they are causing by certain actions.

25X1A6a

Comment: This demand met with lively applause.

4. At this same meeting on 24 October, Otto Grotewohl made a two hour speech in which he discussed two points of British Foreign Minister Bevin's speech: the future of concerns belonging to war criminals, and the problem of the eastern frontier. He stated that the position of the SED is unchanged on the latter point, but that it was noteworthy that Bevin demands only an assurance from the Poles that they will settle and cultivate the western regions of Poland, whereupon he will agree to the present boundary. Grotewohl pointed out that the workers' party in the west and east together had won a bare 45% of the votes; the CDU-CSU 34.5%. These figures prove that the political structure of Germany has not changed since the last Reichstag election in 1932. The SPD has 23.8%, the SED 16.8%, and the KPD approximately 4%. Thus, the situation is just as bad as the period 1928-1933. In such a situation, it is, therefore, desirable to undermine the position of the monopolistic capitalists of the west from the economic side. Accordingly, Bevin must be supported by SED in his demand that the war criminals' factories be expropriated. Grotewohl then demanded that an end be made to the name-calling between east and west and this statement received great approval.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

25X1A2g


CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

- 3 -

5. In connection with SPD's motto, "First repairs, then reparations", Grotewohl stated that the SED considers reparations taken from current production are better than money reparations. He also pointed out that the Americans and British have requisitioned 227 tons of gold in Germany, as well as jewels and other valuables, four-fifths of shipping, and patents and trademarks. He claimed that these, by themselves, add up to an enormous sum which, according to the News Chronicle, is the greatest amount of booty that any victorious nation has ever demanded. In addition, he called attention to the alienation of coal, iron, etc., saying that it was not yet possible to publish these matters in the press, but that they must be kept in mind.
6. A separate source reports that in a secret meeting held on 25 October, following a meeting of the chairmen of the SED, the question was raised whether the exclusion, or at least the weakening, of the political influence of the SED emigres from Moscow might not give the party considerable impetus. Moscow emigres are represented in leading positions in the Executive Committee. Proponents of this idea are Matern, Chairman of the Berlin SED, Paul Merker, and Fechner (formerly of the SPD). This same group demands preferential treatment for the intellectuals of the SED vis-a-vis the old, practical politicians of the Marxist school. It is said that the motto of a unified Germany, which the SED has been using, reaped no followers but only suspicion, because it is propagated by people who spent at least twelve years in Moscow and thus are felt to be representatives not of German but rather of Moscow plans. No decisions were reached on this question.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~